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WHAT RICHMOND'S LABORATORY DOES.

We are especially glad to publish in this paper a letter from Dr. Whitfield, City Chemist, concerning the work of the laboratory under his charge. This is precisely the kind of information The Times-Dispatch desires to present to the people of Richmond, and it would be of service both to the paper and the public were more officials led to take the citizens into their confidence through the press. We doubt whether half of the people of the city even knew such a laboratory for their protection exists. Certainly they must be impressed with what it accomplishes. We regret, however, that the letter had to be inspired by what may have seemed an advertisement on the present testing of materials. Our contention was not that this work was not done properly now, but that for the sake of efficiency and economy, more money might well be expended to extend the tests.

For a city of Richmond's size, 7,000 tests per annum is not enough. We would have more, and perhaps life, by compelling stiffer compliance with specifications. For example, cement is becoming one of the principal structural materials in modern cities. It is used for binder in structures that are supposed to last many years. To secure the highest grade is manifest economy. Some cities inspect cement at the mills, and use none that is not so tested. The laboratory tests extend over twenty-eight days, instead of seven. The Richmond laboratory should be equipped for such work.

In the matter of coal, of which the city is a large purchaser, it is not enough that "samples are frequently examined." Modern methods dictate the testing of each carload by calorimetric experiment on an average sample for the number of actual heat units the coal develops. The price is then adjusted by specification, and payment made, not by guess, or on what the mines are supposed to furnish, but on actual heat produced under the furnace.

That the chemist is of profound importance to the health of a community is manifest from what Dr. Whitfield writes. The guarantee of a clean, unadulterated, germ-free food supply is worth a thousand times what must be spent to give the guarantee.

Almost daily more emphasis is placed on the technical aspects of city government. A municipality is a big business. It is not merely a political organization. Too many citizens know only the superficial aspects of their public affairs. They do not appreciate the importance of laboratories, health work, garbage disposal, education and amusement. Yet these are the vital interests of people, because they affect living itself.

parties. His recommendations as President will give expression to this movement. In adjusting itself to his program, the Democratic party must needs lose a large following, but if Woodrow Wilson meets the expectation of his supporters, the Democratic party will gain more than two adherents for every one it loses.

THE SHORT BALLOT REFORM.

The special committee on constitutional amendments of the Progressive party of New York has just published its proposals for legislation to carry into effect the short ballot principle, in obedience to one of the party's planks. The short ballot principle, which President Roosevelt, President Taft and President-Elect Wilson all endorse, is thus stated: "First—That only those offices should be elective which are important enough to attract (and deserve) public examination; second, that very few offices should be filled by election at one time, so as to permit adequate and unconfused public examination of the candidates and so as to facilitate the free and intelligent making of original tickets by any voter for himself, unaided by political specialists." Wherever the principle has been employed, good results have followed. It is most successful in the government of English cities and in the commission-governed municipalities of the United States.

The New York Progressives propose to shorten the ballot and centre administrative responsibility in the State by eliminating the minor offices from the State ticket, leaving only the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor to be elected, and giving the Governor the right to appoint his own Cabinet. The Governor would, therefore, appoint the secretary of State, State treasurer, attorney-general, controller, State engineer and State surveyor. These and all other offices appointed by the Governor would hold office during his pleasure, except that the Governor's power to remove the controller is conditioned by the requirement that he shall first give the officer a statement of the reasons for his removal and an opportunity to be heard in his own behalf.

"The dangerously great power of politicians in our country is not due to any peculiar civic indifference of the people, but rests on the fact that we are living under a form of democracy that is so unworkable as to constitute in practice a pseudo-democracy," asserts the National Short Ballot Organization, of which Woodrow Wilson is president. Our democracy is "unworkable" because:

1. "It submits to popular election offices which are too unimportant to attract (or deserve) public attention."
2. "It submits to popular election so many offices at one time that many of them are inevitably crowded out from proper public attention."
3. "It submits to popular election so many offices at one time as to make the business of ticket-making too intricate for popular participation, whereupon some sort of political machine becomes an indispensable instrument in electoral action."

The result is that many officials are elected without sufficient previous scrutiny of their records and their fitness by the people. The short ballot reform is gaining strength everywhere, although, outside of municipal government, it is practically untried in the States.

WOMEN AND GOOD ROADS.

At the first session of the International Good Roads Congress, now meeting in Chicago, Mrs. Percy V. Pennington, president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, pledged the support of the federation toward any definite movement for road improvement. The interest of the club women in the good road movement is significant.

Women are equally interested with men in obtaining better roads; they realize that better transportation is needed, both for business and for social life. It is true, as the Chicago Record-Herald puts it, that "better business conditions mean benefit to home life, and that highways over which travel is possible easily at any time of the year will immeasurably improve social conditions. Where cities, villages and country districts are connected by good roads, facilities for visiting and for shopping increase; isolation for country dwellers disappears. Better roads mean better civilization."

Good roads cost heavily, but they constitute a splendid investment. The State of New York in the last thirteen years has built 3,600 miles of them at a cost of about \$10,000 a mile; maintenance adds to the cost. Yet these roads have been of the greatest benefit to the people, while property values near these roads have steadily risen. Good roads bring communities closer together; they permit social intercourse in bad weather, while bad roads bar countless thousands from school and church in such seasons.

public treasury. Pauline is the last of the Republican cows, but there surely is a good Democratic cow somewhere to add a touch of domesticity to the White House grounds and supply the milk for the President's maternal oatmeal.

Perhaps the President-elect, in refusing to accept the cow proffered him, recalled the experience of Grover Cleveland, who was presented with a fine bovine by George W. Childs, of Philadelphia. The animal had hardly made herself at home in the White House yard before the President issued his tariff-destroying message, which Mr. Childs denounced in unqualified terms. It was thought that President Cleveland would return the cow forthwith, but he never did.

Back to the pine woods of Wisconsin goes Pauline Wayne, whose administration has been about the only successful one to which the Republicans can lay claim. She did her level best; no cow could have done more. But the fortune of politics returns her to the ranks of private cowpunch; she suffers the penalty which comes to so many that fill public office. In her place, there must be put a progressive Democratic cow. Inasmuch as Vice-President Marshall will have little to do, he might add to the democratic simplicity of the tout ensemble at the White House by now and then going out in the back yard and milking the cow by way of demonstrating one of the best things we do in a democracy.

WHILE IS OUR ARMY?

The military flurry over the Mexican situation, now fortunately subsiding, made both soldier and civilian ask: If we ever do have a war, where will the army come from? How many potential soldiers has the United States? The answer is aptly given in some statistics recently published by the Census Bureau as to the number of males comprising the "natural militia" in 1910.

In that year the population of the United States included 29,473,654 males of service age, that is, between eighteen and forty-four years. This tremendous total is one of the most powerful arguments for peace conceivable. It implies a possible army of over 15,000,000 able-bodied men. Perhaps China and India alone can compare in absolute fighting strength with the United States. When the mental quality of this group, and the material resources of the nation are added, it is not idle boasting to claim that we are potentially the most powerful people in all history. We might almost claim to be too powerful to need war.

Our fighting strength has increased in the last decade, for while the population increased in that time by 21 per cent, the men of militia age increased by 25.5 per cent. We have increased our dormant army out of the entire nation by 1 per cent. The reason given is that immigration has been more predominantly male.

An interesting light on the social structure of our civilization is indicated by the fact that in Wyoming is found the highest percentage of militia males, about 34 per cent. In general the Western and Coast States contain more men of middle age. Immigration of young men, and the comparative newness of this section, coupled with the perhaps harsher survival tests to which the people were submitted, account for their virility. A very old State, North Carolina, furnishes the smallest percentage, 17.5.

Such figures are comforting to the timorous, but they are more useful to show our progress in peace than as a symbol of our brute strength for war.

The pleasant part of amateur gardening is now at hand—the reading of the seed catalogues that contain the most gorgeous pictures of fruits and flowers that never bloom anywhere outside of the seed catalogue. Instead of exercising the muscles, this form of evening gardening exercises the imagination.

What with one thing and another of innovation and reform, this good old United States is nearing the speed limit.

They must call them "Cabinet states" because they are so easily washed out next day.

The master of ceremonies at the inauguration will undoubtedly be the weather man.

Mark Twain probably reached old age by keeping on living.

When the shouting and the tumult dies, and the captains and the kings depart, we think it would be a good time to all go fishing.

Marsie Henry Watterson has not been consulted about the Cabinet, but we won't be having some pungent remarks to make about it nevertheless, and, therefore.

The college boys who get a hell-day are strong for School Teacher Wilson.

The celebrated Oxford Dictionary of the English language has at last gotten through "Z" after some quarter of a century of toil. It is too bad that most of the words we use to-day will not appear. The dictionary is always behind the times.

On the Spur of the Moment
By Roy K. Moulton

Microbes.
(A news item states that an eminent professor has just discovered microbes on the handles of baby cars, which give the mothers the nurse maids who push them.)

Oh, listen to the scientist, fair nurse, before you grab that baby car. The old familiar handle of the little baby car. He's found the deadly microbes who are making it their lair. He's found them on the handle here and there and everywhere.

He's found them on the doorknob and upon the razor box. He's found them on the drinking cup and in the telephone. He's found them on the dollar bills and on the money order.

He's found them on the coffee-pot and on the chandelier. He's found them in the cedar chest and in the chiffonier. He's found them on the auto horn and on the water and clock.

He's found them on the necktie pin and on the walking cane. He's found them on the monkey wrench and on the pocket knife. The fact is, he's been looking for the microbes all his life. He's found them on the handle of the baby car. And it is pretty safe to bet that in the future state, he'll try to find some microbes clinging to the penny gaiter.

From the Hickoryville Clarion.
Society is divided into three classes in our town—six cyclists, four cyclists and runabouts. Most of 'em are self-starters.

Miss Annurville Teeter sang a song at the party the other night. She was cheered heartily by several of her near relatives.

The floor of the Hogwallow post-office is much on one side. The postmaster has had to build up the sole on one side of his shoes.

Mrs. Hank Tunniss thought she heard a burglar in the house the other night and she was so scared that all of her hair, which was hanging in the clothes press, turned white.

Somebody asked Len Higgins the other day if he knew of a good lawyer. He thought quite awhile and finally said he didn't know a really good lawyer, but he could name plenty of able ones.

Amie Hicks has got a new fangled invention which fastens on the hind leg of a mule and prevents him from kicking. Amie says he is sure it will be a success if he lives to get it fastened on, but he will have to be older then Methuselah.

The Good Old Times.
Sez Lemuel Hicks, sez he to me. The times ain't like what they used to be. When a feller could go with a ten-cent piece.

And git enough bacon for to grease The panicle griddle all nice and neat. And then have a good chunk left to eat.

Then butter was fifteen cents a pound And we always had enough to go round. A feller could go with a dollar bill And a whole blamed grocery order fill.

But nowadays for a five banknote A feller can't git nothin' he can tote. Right home in the pocket of his overcoat. Beats all how far a feller could go On a dollar back for ten years or so.

But prices are gettin' so god darn high We'll all eat hay like a horse bime by. When good old days we will see no more. When a man with a dollar could buy out a store.

But there is one thing that we must allow. There's what so many dollars as there are right now. Oh, what has become of the old-fashioned way of life.

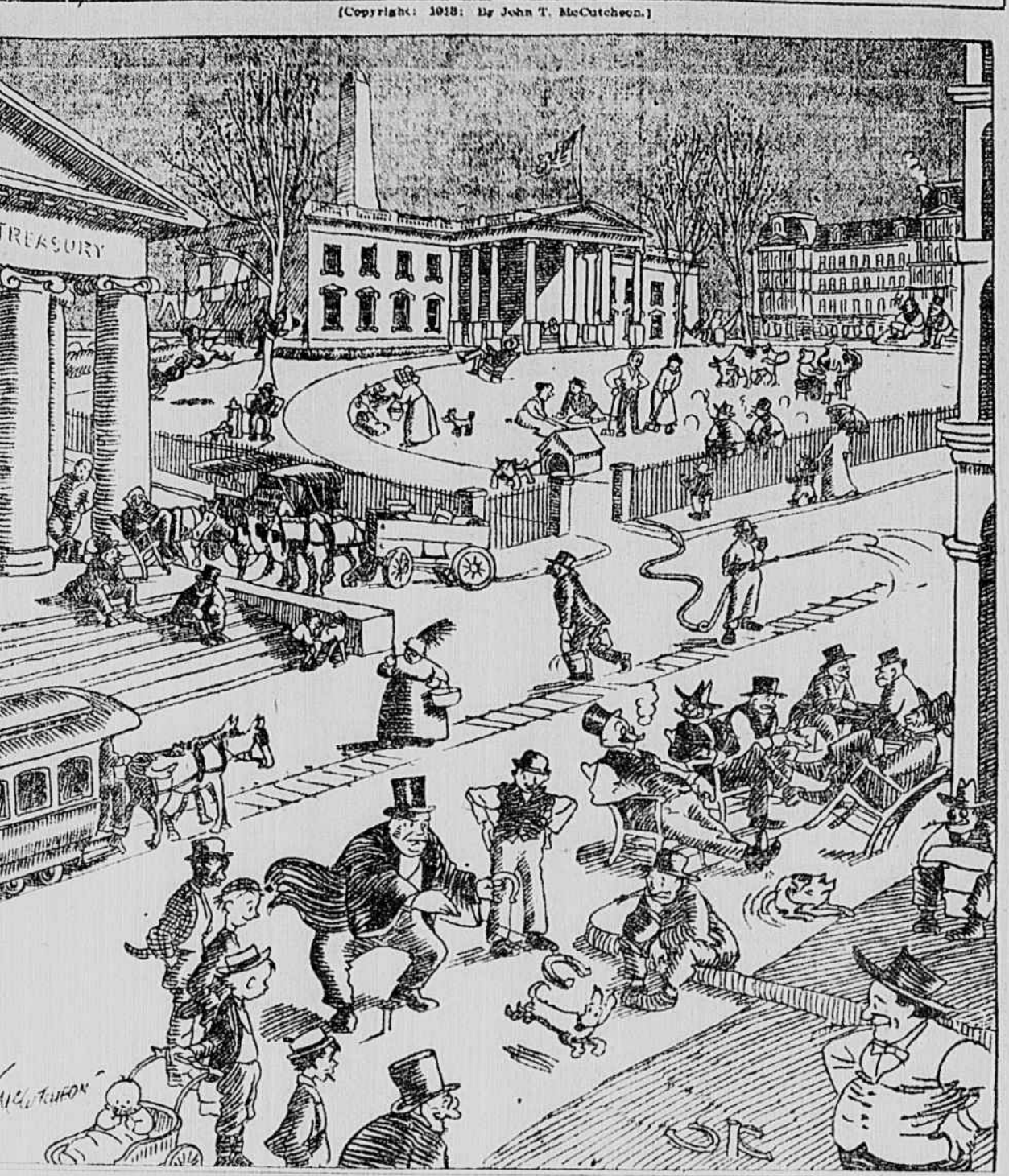
Who called for his sweetheart when sleighing was fine. And took her out riding, by gum, in the cutter.

And drove with one arm draped around her waistline? He's got a new-fangled self-starting car. And riding has lost at least one of its charms.

Because, don't you see when he's steering the car? He has to keep driving with both of his arms.



IF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IS ONE OF REAL JEFFERSONIAN SIMPLICITY.
By John T. McCutcheon.



try! Well, we are dazed, for we hear little of it in this section. The people like the most of the world, are too busy with other matters. Christies Science is seldom mentioned, and that can well stay in the cities, where there are many things not needed at this time.

We are glad again that the circulation of Russell literature is effective. We will try to make it more plentiful, and the fact that it is cheap calls to mind the words of the prophet (Isa. lv. 1) and the statements of our Lord and others. Fortunately, we have better sense than to state that the truths, teachings and doctrines of the Scriptures are "cheap." It is only cheap in the blinding that may contain them, for we desire to get what the Bible really teaches before the people. In pride and blindness one may say things that will leave them in sorrow and anguish of soul some day.

And now we have come to the final flat. This man Blank knows no more about the depth, the grandeur, the harmony and the convincing truth of Russell's teachings, built up step by step upon the Word of God, than yonder Berkshire rolling in the sun. Two years ago he never read a line of it. In his life, just heard some of it, he speaks of it, perhaps in prejudice, now he steps upon a tussock and proceeds to pass "condemnation without investigation," by telling us that we haven't been trained particularly in the study of the Bible. "Shades of Caesar!" but who are you? What is the great training we are now to receive? Infant school, or the training of a parrot? We are now immortal and have no need for the resurrection, the apostles preached about; that we need not wait for Christ's second coming before receiving the reward or gift of immortality promised to the saints and raising to life, again, human beings, because when we seem to die, we are not dead, but more alive than ever and go straight to heaven? We rejoice that we are not trained in life with all such twisted teaching of men. The Word of God tells us what is true, plainly so, we need not err therein.

We have met with a veritable prophet at Mohammed, who has only to say, "Let there be light, and there shall be light." But it's not likely country people will creep behind barrels and boxes, or dive under counters at the announcement of your appearance. We know "our proper" would shrink from coming into judgment as much as anyone else, but it is so nice to hand it out to the other person, and so much easier. Study Revelation and discern the truth. In fact, you know it now, but would not give up the opinions of men, however faulty, nor the honors, glory, pride, stink, etc. of the nominal church for anything else whatsoever, even though it were declared with the pen of an angel. We find comfort in the Bible statements of the millennium that is to be soon ushered in, with the presence of Christ and His saints in the resurrection, for which doctrine we are called in question in this day of evil. Adam has been dead for 2,000 years, yet at the voice of the Son of God he will arise to receive his reward, with the balance of mankind, over whom Christ and His saints are to rule a thousand years.

A COUNTRY FOOL.
To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—We did not intend to notice the spiteful, ignorant little article under above heading, but its superciliousness and the glaring ignorance of what it attempted to condemn needed a few words of correction in the interests of truth.

We are glad to know that the truth was acknowledged in the statement that "Pastor Russell's teachings are especially attractive." Truth direct from the Bible is always so—but here Blank added "they were equally pernicious and offensive in rural districts." What an anomaly! The statements of the words of Scripture working for evil and that effectively in the count-

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Marine School.
Please inform me where the government marine school nearest to Richmond is located.
D. T. J.
At Old Point

Ecology on Joseph Bryan.
Can you tell me where I may find an ecology on Mr. Joseph Bryan, the founder of The Times-Dispatch?
C. H. ROWLETTE

The nearest to a worthy record of his life and actions is to be found in the hearts of those who know him. The most elegant of American writers of our time, Captain William Gordon McCabe, composed and the Virginia Historical Society published an appreciation of Mr. Bryan soon after his lamented death. This will come nearer answering your purpose than anything else we know, and you may see a copy at the State Library or at the rooms of the Historical Society.

Richmond, Virginia